

**ENTERED**

October 08, 2020

David J. Bradley, Clerk

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS  
VICTORIA DIVISION****UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,  
Plaintiff,****v.****ANITRA JENKINS,  
Defendant.**§  
§  
§  
§  
§  
§  
§**CRIMINAL NO. 6:03-50****MEMORANDUM OPINION & ORDER**

Pending before the Court is Defendant Anitra Jenkins' "Petition for Compassionate Release Pursuant to 3582(c)(1)(A)(i) of the First Step Act Also Known as Criminal Justice Reform Act, S. 756 of 2018 and the Cares Act of 2020" (D.E. 87) and supplemental letter in support (D.E. 88).

**I. BACKGROUND**

In 2004, Defendant was sentenced to 262 months' imprisonment after pleading guilty to bank robbery and possession of a firearm in furtherance of a crime of violence. She has served roughly 205 (78%) months of her sentence and has a projected release date, after good time credit, of February 9, 2023. Defendant now moves the Court to reduce her sentence to 244 months, which she claims would allow her to be released to home confinement or a halfway house, because she fears contracting COVID-19 while in prison. She further states that she wishes to care for her elderly mother.

**II. LEGAL STANDARD**

The statute, 18 U.S.C. § 3582(c)(1)(A), authorizes a court to reduce a defendant's sentence under a limited number of circumstances:

**(c) Modification of an Imposed Term of Imprisonment.**—The court may not modify a term of imprisonment once it has been imposed except that—

(1) in any case—

(A) the court, upon motion of the Director of the Bureau of Prisons, or upon motion of the defendant after the defendant has fully exhausted all administrative rights to appeal a failure of the Bureau of Prisons to bring a motion on the defendant's behalf or the lapse of 30 days from the receipt of such a request by the warden of the defendant's facility, whichever is earlier, may reduce the term of imprisonment (and may impose a term of probation or supervised release with or without conditions that does not exceed the unserved portion of the original term of imprisonment), after considering the factors set forth in section 3553(a) to the extent that they are applicable, if it finds that—

(i) *extraordinary and compelling reasons warrant such a reduction . . .* and that such a reduction is consistent with applicable policy statements issued by the Sentencing Commission.

18 U.S.C. § 3582(c)(1)(A)(i) (emphasis added).

The applicable United States Sentencing Commission policy statement provides that extraordinary and compelling reasons for early release exist where:

**(A) Medical Condition of the Defendant.—**

(i) The defendant is suffering from a terminal illness (i.e., a serious and advanced illness with an end of life trajectory). A specific prognosis of life expectancy (i.e., a probability of death within a specific time period) is not required. Examples include metastatic solid-tumor cancer, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), end-stage organ disease, and advanced dementia.

(ii) The defendant is—

(I) suffering from a serious physical or medical condition,

(II) suffering from a serious functional or cognitive impairment, or

(III) experiencing deteriorating physical or mental health because of the aging process,

that substantially diminishes the ability of the defendant to provide self-care within the environment of a correctional facility and from which he or she is not expected to recover.

**(B) Age of the Defendant. –**

The defendant is (i) at least 65 years old; (ii) is experiencing a serious deterioration in physical or mental health because of the aging process; and (iii) has served at least 10 years or 75 percent of his or her term of imprisonment, whichever is less;

**(C) Family Circumstances. –**

(i) The death or incapacitation of the caregiver of the defendant's minor child or minor children.

(ii) The incapacitation of the defendant's spouse or registered partner when the defendant would be the only available caregiver for the spouse or registered partner.

**(D) Other Reasons. –**

As determined by the Director of the Bureau of Prisons, there exists in the defendant's case an extraordinary or compelling reason other than, or in combination with, the reasons described in subdivisions (A) through (C).

U.S.S.G. § 1B1.13(1)(A), Application Note 1.

Even if “extraordinary and compelling reasons” for early release exist, the Guidelines’ policy statements provide for a reduction in sentence only if a defendant “is not a danger to the safety of any other person or the community, as provided in 18 U.S.C. §3142(g).” U.S.S.G. § 1B1.13(2). Factors relevant to this inquiry include: (1) the nature and circumstances of the offenses of conviction, including whether the offense is a crime of violence, or involves a minor victim, a controlled substance, or a firearm, explosive, or destructive device; (2) the weight of the evidence; (3) the defendant’s history and characteristics; and (4) the nature and seriousness of the danger to any person or the community that would be posed by the defendant’s release. *See* 18 U.S.C. § 3142(g).

Finally, the Court must consider whether a reduction is consistent with the applicable section 3553(a) factors. *See* 18 U.S.C. § 3582(c)(1)(A); U.S.S.G. § 1B1.13. The applicable statutory factors include, among others: the defendant’s history and characteristics; the nature and circumstances of the offense; the need for the sentence to reflect the seriousness of the offense, promote respect for the law, and provide just punishment for the offense; the need to deter criminal conduct and protect the public from further crimes of the defendant; the need to

provide the defendant with, among other things, any needed medical treatment; and the various kinds of sentences available. 18 U.S.C. §§ 3553(a)(1)-(7).

With respect to motions for compassionate release based on COVID-19:

A review of a motion for release based on COVID-19 is highly fact-intensive and dependent on the specific conditions of confinement and medical circumstances faced by the defendant. Hence, a prisoner cannot satisfy his burden of proof by simply citing to nationwide COVID-19 statistics, asserting generalized statements on conditions of confinement within the BOP, or making sweeping allegations about a prison's ability or lack thereof to contain an outbreak. . . . [T]he rampant spread of the coronavirus and the conditions of confinement in jail, alone, are not sufficient grounds to justify a finding of extraordinary and compelling circumstances. Rather, those circumstances are applicable to all inmates who are currently imprisoned and hence are not unique to any one person.

*United States v. Koons*, 2020 WL 1940570, at \*4 & n.8 (W.D. La. Apr. 21, 2020) (citing *United States v. Raia*, 954 F.3d 594, 597 (3d Cir. 2020)).

“In general, the defendant has the burden to show circumstances meeting the test for compassionate release.” *United States v. Stowe*, 2019 WL 4673725, at \*2 (S.D. Tex. Sept. 25, 2019).

### III. ANALYSIS

Defendant is 42 years old. She claims that she “meets 2 of the risk factors stated in the CDC guidelines” for individuals who are at risk for complications from COVID-19 (D.E. 87, p. 3), but she does not identify what those risk factors are. Defendant also complains generally about the conditions of confinement at FCI Waseca while on COVID lockdown, including unhealthy meals, cancellation of educational programs, and inability to exercise. She further states that her father recently died of complications from COVID-19 while battling cancer, and she wishes to take care of her elderly mother, who requires home healthcare. Finally, Defendant emphasizes that she has completed 57 educational classes while incarcerated and has not been involved in any prison fights in more than 5 years.

While the Court is permitted to consider post-sentencing rehabilitation in determining whether to grant an eligible defendant a sentence reduction, it is not authorized to grant a reduction based upon post-sentencing rehabilitation alone. *See* U.S.S.G. § 1B1.10, app. n.1(B)(iii). Defendant has failed to offer evidence of, or even identify, any underlying medical condition that would make her particularly vulnerable to severe illness or death should she contract COVID-19.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, “caring for a sick and/or aging parent is not a qualifying ‘family circumstance’ under U.S.S.G. § 1B1.13(1)(A).” *United States v. Hudec*, No. 4:91-CR-1-1, 2020 WL 4925675, at \*5 (S.D. Tex. Aug. 19, 2020) (collecting cases); *see also United States v. Ingram*, 2019 WL 3162305, at \*2 (S.D. Ohio Jul. 16, 2019) (denying compassionate release to defendant to care for ill mother because “[m]any, if not all inmates, have aging and sick parents. Such circumstance is not extraordinary.”)). Finally, the BOP has not determined any other extraordinary and compelling reason exists to support Defendant’s release. In fact, Defendant does not even claim to have pursued her remedies within the BOP before petitioning the Court for compassionate release as required.

---

1. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, older adults (age 65 and above) and people of any age who have certain underlying medical conditions are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. *People with Certain Medical Conditions*, CDC (Sept. 11, 2020), <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html>. People of any age with the following conditions *are* at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19: Cancer, Chronic kidney disease; COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease); Immunocompromised state from solid organ transplant; Obesity; Serious heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies; Sickle cell disease; and Type 2 diabetes mellitus. People with the following conditions *might be* at an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19: Asthma (moderate-to-severe); Cerebrovascular disease; Cystic fibrosis; Hypertension; Immunocompromised state from blood or bone marrow transplant, immune deficiencies, HIV, use of corticosteroids, or use of other immune weakening medicines; Neurologic conditions, such as dementia; Liver disease; Pregnancy; Pulmonary fibrosis; Smoking; Thalassemia; and Type 1 diabetes mellitus.

“Courts in the Southern District of Texas have ruled that defendants who move for compassionate release still need to initially petition the BOP and, subsequently, fully exhaust their administrative rights to appeal or wait for 30 days to lapse from such a petition in order to bring a motion pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3582(c)(1)(A).” *United States v. Gomez*, 2020 WL 2061537, at \*1 (S.D. Tex. Apr. 29, 2020) (citing *United States v. Licciardello*, 2020 WL 1942787 (S.D. Tex. Apr. 22, 2020); *United States v. Orellana*, 2020 WL 1853797, at \*1 (S.D. Tex. Apr. 10, 2020)). *See also, e.g., United States v. Clark*, 2020 WL 1557397, at \*3 (M.D. La. Apr. 1, 2020) (denying motion for compassionate release based on fears of contracting COVID-19 in prison where defendant conceded he had not exhausted administrative remedies).


Because Defendant has failed to demonstrate that she has complied with the exhaustion requirements under § 3582, her motion is not ripe for review, and the Court is without jurisdiction to grant it.

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

For the foregoing reasons, Defendant’s Petition for Compassionate Release (D.E. 87) is **DENIED**.

It is so **ORDERED**.

It is so **ORDERED** this 6<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2020.

  
JOHN D. RAINEY  
SENIOR U.S. DISTRICT JUDGE